

September 1, 2005

MEMORANDUM FOR State Directors
 State Metrologists (including GIPSA/USDA)

From: Georgia L. Harris
 Weights & Measures Division
 Laboratory Metrology Group Leader

Subject: **Annual Submission for 2006 NIST Laboratory Recognition**

The following information is provided to assist you in preparing for the 2006 and in some cases 2006-2007 review cycles. It is preferred that all items be submitted electronically in any format except e-mail: CD, DVD, floppy disk, Zip disk, or even USB sticks are all acceptable formats. We will *not* track items submitted by e-mail.

Review Cycle and Deadlines

In order to maintain or obtain NIST/OWM Recognition for your laboratory, you must submit materials each year between October 1 and November 15. The due date is November 15 each year. Please do not send items by Federal Express or UPS hoping to speed up delivery as these methods actually delay delivery due to the shipping, handling, and delivery methods in place for security reasons. Mailed submissions often arrive at our desks more quickly than those intended for overnight delivery.

Materials that are not submitted on time may not be reviewed prior to the expiration of your current Recognition certificate. We will make no commitments of timely reviews for late submissions. We have seen an increasing problem with laboratories failing to comply with the WMD deadline. Again, the deadline is November 15; this has been the documented deadline since 1986. We will consider items post-marked by the deadline to be compliant. As a result of the increasing problem of missed deadlines, submissions that are received late during this review cycle may not be reviewed at all. Please submit your material by the due date to allow time for an adequate WMD review.

Two-Year Certificates Available

If a number of conditions are met during this review cycle, WMD will issue a 2-year certificate this year. The benefit of this certificate is that only "special request" items and updates will be required during the next submission cycle in 2006 for the 2007 cycle. To be eligible for a 2-year certificate, the following conditions must be met:

- Must submit a COMPLETE package on time.
- Must have a certificate from the latest cycle (no lapses).
- Must have a record of submitting on time (3 of last 5 years, latest 2) or be NVLAP accredited.
- Current certificate must not be "conditional."
- Must not have any unresolved deficiencies; deficiencies identified in previous reviews may be resolved with this submission.
- Must be up to date with LAP problems, Quality Manual, Administrative Procedures, and PT participation, reporting, and corrective action.

Table 1 – Items to Submit

Review the following Table 1 for a checklist of what is to be submitted this year. Modifications have been made to identify specific requests for this review cycle. WMD has requested the same core information each year since NIST Handbook 143 was updated in 1996. You will note that there are a

number of items we are NOT requesting for this review cycle (unless your previous Recognition was lapsed or deficiencies were noted in that area). Keep in mind that, even though some items are not requested in the submission this year, internal assessments, technical audits, and management reviews are REQUIRED annually. These items may be requested to verify conditions as needed. Two additional Technical Audits are required this year. Detailed descriptions of the information on Table 1 can be found in NIST Handbook 143, Program Handbook, 2003 edition, (available on line: <http://www.nist.gov/labmetrology>, State Laboratory Program.) Blank forms can be downloaded in Word format from the site listed above.

Modified Table 1. Submission requirements for 2006 and 2006-2007 recognition

Reference	Item Description	Submit for 2006	Notes
Appendix B*	Request for Recognition, Parameters and Scope, Approved Signatories, Authorized Representative	YES	
Appendix C	Internal Assessment Checklist NOTE: MUST INCLUDE TECHNICAL ASSESSMENT!	NO	Send if Recognition lapsed. (Required internal review; may be requested.)
	Management Review & Internal Audit	NO	Send if Recognition lapsed. (Required internal review; may be requested.)
Appendix D	Summary of Services	NO	Send if Recognition lapsed.
Uncertainty Charts*	For every measurement parameter and nominal value (ranges unacceptable)	YES	
Traceability Verification Letter	Submit only if you want a "to whom it may concern memo" regarding your laboratory traceability	NO	Labs with "conditional" status are not eligible. Draft copy must be submitted if you want a customer memo.
QM	Laboratory Quality Manual (if updated)	NO	Send updates and deficiency corrections.
CC	Measurement control - control charts, surveillance tests for every measurement area - if requested	NO	Send if Recognition lapsed.
Standards	Calibration reports for standards	NO	Send updates only.
LAPs	Laboratory Auditing Program (LAP) problems assigned in Training Program	NO	Send if complete and required for level requested.
PT Form*	Proficiency Test Follow Up Form – complete analysis for ALL round robins even if "passed".	YES	
SPECIAL*	Technical Audit: Facility	YES	
SPECIAL*	Technical Audit: Volume Calibration	YES	

* Required. ** One checklist required.

Appendix C: ISO/IEC 17025 Update Process and Checklist

DO NOT send an ISO/IEC 17025 checklist (or Appendix C) this year unless your recognition lapsed and you did not have a certificate in 2005.

If you do submit the 17025 checklist, please note progress made on the deficiencies and action items from the previous management review. Be sure to treat the checklist as a form to describe how your laboratory complies versus simply entering yes/no answers regarding compliance. Forms are available electronically from the website.

Appendix C: Management Reviews & Internal Audits

DO NOT send copies of your management review reports or internal audits this year unless your recognition lapsed and you did not have a certificate in 2005. This form is available electronically on the website.

Quality Manuals

Do not send quality manuals or administrative procedures unless there are updates. The quality manuals must comply with the CURRENT version of NIST Handbook 143 (2003)! Only submit quality manuals at this time if they have been updated. In some cases, you have been notified that you will not obtain recognition unless updates are completed.

Special Requests for 2005

The following 3 items are being requested this year for specific technical assessments.

- Proficiency Test Participation and Corrective Action (as needed)
- Technical Audit: Facility Evaluation
- Technical Audit: Volumetric Calibrations

Proficiency Tests

To evaluate measurement assurance and compliance to the published WMD policy, please submit copies of "Laboratory Follow Up and Corrective Action Checklist" forms for all round robins you participated in during 2004 and 2005 (that have not already been identified in a previous submission). Forms are available on the NIST website: <http://ts.nist.gov/ts/htdocs/230/235/roundrobin/roundrobins.htm>. We expect that if corrective action was appropriate that it has been completed or is in progress with a planned completion date by the time your submission is sent in.

Technical Audit: Facility Evaluation

We have noted a number of problems with facilities that will be assessed on a national level. Please complete the enclosed form electronically and submit with the rest of your submission.

Technical Audit: Volumetric Calibrations

We have identified a number of concerns in the traceability system for volume calibrations for 5 gallons and larger (exclusive of glassware). The results from the 5 gallon and 15 gallon gravimetric calibration round robins, laboratories getting volume calibrations from accredited laboratories instead of NIST, combined with numerous internal calibrations, and problems we are seeing in the 100 gallon round robin are causing a number of national concerns that will be best addressed with a technical assessment on a national level. If you have had failures on any of the volumetric round robins, please be sure to address the root cause and corrective actions on the Proficiency Test Follow Up and Corrective Action Checklists. Please complete the enclosed form electronically and submit with the rest of your submission.